made staple fibres, the whole value addition chain has been given an option of excise exemption.

(vii) The import of specified textiles and garment machinery items has been allowed at a concessional rate of customs duty to encourage investments and to make our textile products competitive in the global market. The cost of machinery has also been reduced through fiscal policy measures.

(viii) For the speedy modernisation of the textile processing sector, Government has introduced, *w.e.f.* 20.4.2005, a credit linked captial subsidy scheme @ 10% under TUFS, in addition to the existing 5% interest reimbursement.

(ix) The National Institute for Fashion Technology (NIFT), its seven branches, and the Apparel Training & Design Centres (ATDCs) are running various courses/programmes to meet the skilled manpower requirements of the textile industry, especially apparel, in the field of design, merchandising and marketing.

(x) Facilities like eco-testing laboratories have been created to enable exporters to get garments/textiles pre-tested so that they conform to the requirements of the importing countries.

Jobs potential in textile Sector

1017. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Government sponsored study indicates that 12 million jobs which include 5 million direct employment and 7 million in the allied sectors, could be created in the Textile sector,

(b) whether the study has also sugested certain basis labour reforms such as increasing daily working hours from 8 to 12, hiking weekly working hours from 48 to 60, allowing women to work till 10.00 P.M. etc.;

(c) if so, whether Government propose to consider these suggestions; and

(d) by when a comprehensive labour policy on the issue is likely to be declared?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) No, Sir. (b) and (c) Do not arise in view of (a) above. (d) Since the matter needs forging a political consensus, no fixed time frame can be prescribed.